
NEWS From:

Congressman Mike Honda

FIFTEENTH DISTRICT - CALIFORNIA



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Rep. Honda Amendment to Increase Teacher Mentoring Programs Passes House Floor

Amendment included in 'Ready to Teach Act of 2003' which authorizes \$1.8 billion in funding for 2004-2008

WASHINGTON, July 9, 2003 — Today, the U.S. House of Representatives approved an amendment by **Rep. Mike Honda (D-San Jose)** that would allow grant funds to be used by local educational agencies (LEAs) for teacher mentoring programs. The amendment was included in H.R. 2211, the "Ready to Teach Act of 2003," which passed the House floor by a vote of 404-17.

"As a former school teacher and principal, I know first-hand about the challenges new teachers face as they begin their careers," said **Rep. Honda**. "Recent reports conclude that nearly one quarter of teachers leave the teaching profession by the end of their second year, and almost half of them leave within five years. This revolving-door phenomenon is a serious problem, and a drain on schools' resources due to the costs of rehiring and retraining. My amendment is aimed at giving new teachers the support they need so that they can have long and fulfilling careers. It is critical that children have the opportunity to learn and benefit from experienced teachers." Rep. Honda's amendment is based on H.R. 1611, the "Teacher Mentoring Act," which he introduced on April 3, 2003.

During the 1999-2000 academic year, schools throughout the country hired approximately 535,000 teachers. Just a year later, approximately 252,000 teachers transferred to different schools, and 287,000 left the profession altogether. Unfortunately, this is not a unique phenomenon. According to a report released by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) in

January 2003, nearly 25 percent of new teachers quit by the end of their second year, and almost 50 percent of them leave within five years. These statistics are even more alarming in high-poverty schools where the turnover rate is almost one-third higher than the national average. Teachers without mentoring programs have been shown to leave the profession at a rate almost 70 percent higher than those with mentoring programs.

“We support the amendment by Rep. Mike Honda to include mentoring programs for teachers,” said **Charlotte J. Fraas, Director of Legislation** with the **American Federation of Teachers**. “We believe that these additions to current law will be vital to the future of education as we face an impending teacher shortage through teacher retirements and increased student enrollment.”

H.R. 2211 Background

H.R. 2211 would reauthorize programs under Title II of the Higher Education Act. These programs are currently authorized through 2004. H.R. 2211 would reauthorize them through 2008. The bill also would create a new grant program for higher education institutions that have historically served minority populations and authorize these grants through 2008. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that authorizations under the bill would total \$219 million in 2004 and approximately \$1.8 billion over the 2004-2008 period.